

- Ibid.*, p. 65. See also S. G. ELLIOT, "The rite of circumcision" *JMEOS* [Nr. 2,] 1912-1913, 1913, p. 75
- For these festivals see, M. STRACMASS, "Les fêtes de la circoncision chez les anciens Egyptiens", *CdE LX* (fasc. 119-120), 1985, pp. 292 ff.
- Going through all the available data, D. STEFANOVIĆ, "Once more about *mryt* and 'market-place'", *Journal of the Serbian Archeological Society* 17, 2001, pp.231-234, wrote a brief and a comprehensive study that was ended with: "What I have to say, is that we may understand, in some causes *mryt* as a 'market,' but in the moment I am not sure that we have enough data to proof that *mryt* mean 'Market' and that it could be translated as 'market place. I would like to point out that Athens agora was a market place. On Nile's riverbanks were situated 'markets,' but that the word 'market-place' existed in Ancient Egyptian lexical, there is no proof in the moment. "Riverbank" could be used to mean "the market" and "trading" as well. See also *cf.* H. FISCHER "The sunshade of the market place", *MMJ* 6, 1972, pp. 151-156; Ch. Eyre, "The market Women of Pharoanic Egypt", p. 177, nos. 22-24, p. 181; M. Ibrahim Aly, "The scenes of the local market in Pharoanic Egypt", *SASAE* ch. 34/1, 2005, pp. 95-6.

- Ancient Egypt*, II, p. 135; N. I. EBEID, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-120; see also MEINARDUS, OTTO, "Mythological, Historical and Sociological Aspects of the Practice of Female Circumcision among the Egyptians" in *Acta Ethnographica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 16, 1967, Budapest, pp. 387-397.
- J. F. NUNN, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*, London, 1996, p.170.
 - Concerning this piece of stone A. BADAWY says: "It is called the 'Stone of Memphis' and it is a carbonate of lime, known to DIOSCORIDES (de mat. Med. V, 158) and PLINY (XXVI, 7. It has never been mentioned in the Egyptian papyri", *cf.*, *ibid.*, p.19.
 - Alums are colorless, odorless, and exist as a white crystalline powder. They are composed of a group of hydrated double salts, usually consisting of aluminum sulfate, water of hydration, and the sulfate of another element. The commercial uses of alums mainly stem from the hydrolysis of the aluminum ions, which results in the precipitation of aluminum hydroxide. This chemical has various industrial uses. Paper is sized, for example, by depositing aluminum hydroxide in the interstices of the cellulose fibres. Aluminum hydroxide adsorbs suspended particles from water and is thus a useful flocculating agent in water-purification plants. Alums are also used in pickling, in baking powder, in fire extinguishers, and as astringents in medicine.
 - A. M. ROTH, *op. cit.*, p. 66; J. F. NUNN, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
 - For the shaving of the pubic hair, see "the Body care" *supra*.
 - *Ibid.*, p. 135. However, it is to be mentioned here the problematic text inscribed in the Ebers Papyrus that was translated by B. EBBELL as "Remedy for a prepuce which is cut off (circumcised) and blood comes out: *djert*-honey, cattle-bone, sycamore, fruit of *djais* are mixed together and applied thereto", *cf.* EBBELL, *The Papyrus Ebers*, Copenhagen, 1937, p. 103. Other scholars interpreted the text as "Remedy for an acacia thorn if it is extracted and blood comes out of it ...", see ; N. I. EBEID, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
 - D. DUNHAM, *Naga-ed-Dêr stelae of the First Intermediate Period*, Boston, 1937, no. 84, II. 4-5; P. GHALIOUNGUI, *op. cit.*, p. 116; A. M. ROTH, *Egypt in Phyles in the Old Kingdom, The Evolution of a System of Social Organization. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, Oriental Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1991, p.71; J. M. FILER *op. cit.*, p.135; N. I. EBEID, *op. cit.* pp. 117-8.
 - For this block see F. CHABAS, "De la circoncision chez les Égyptiens", *Rev. Ar.* 3, 1861, pp.298-300 ; P. GHALIOUNGUI, *op. cit.*, p. 119 (Fig. 7).
 - J. CAPART, *Une rue de tombeaux à Saqqarah*, Bruxelles, 1907, pl. 65; A. M. ROTH, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-66, Fig. 4. 1.
 - For the readings *sbi*, see *Wb.* IV, p. 81(15).
 - A. M. ROTH, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

- hairdressers, *cf.*, LYN GREEN, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, II, Cairo, 2001, pp.73-6, 134-5.
- For the market scenes see my article "The Scenes of the Local Market in the Pharaonic Egypt (An Analytic Study)" in *SASAE cahier* 34, 2005, pp. 79-100.
 - We may mention here the scene represented in the tomb of 'Ankhma'hor at Saqqara that shows a pedicurist dealing with a client left foot's toe. Begging the pedicurist to be gentle with his toe, the client says: *m rdi mr n 'nw* "Do not cause the pain of the nail's cutting". Calming him the pedicurist replays: *iry.i r hsi.k ityw* "I will do (it) as thy desire, sovereign". The manicurist, entitled as *ir(w) 'nwt*, is depicted in the same scene dealing with another client fingernails and says: *rdi hps* "give arm". *Cf.*, ALEXANDER BADAWY, *The Tomb of Nyhetep-Ptah at Giza and the Tomb of 'Ankhma'hor at Saqqara*, London, 1978, p.19, fig. 28. For the other tombs, see J. VANDIER, *Manuel d'Archéologie Egyptienne*, V, Paris, 196*, pp. 179 ff.; A. M. MOUSSA & H. ALTENMÜLLER, *op. cit.*, p. 79 (. 242).
 - LYN GREEN, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
 - ALEXANDER BADAWY, *op. cit.*, p. 19, fig. 27, pl. 30. For this scene and the circumcision in general, see E. BAILEY, "Circumcision in Ancient Egypt", *BACE* 7, 1996, pp. 15-28; KANAWATI, N. and A. HASSAN, *The Teti Cemetery at Saqqara*, II, *The Tomb of Ankhmahor*, Warminster, 1997; SPIGELMAN, Mark. "The Circumcision Scene in the Tomb of Ankhmahor: The First Record of Emergency Surgery", *BACE* 8, 1997, pp. 91-100.
 - According to A. BADAWY, the determinative here represented as a curved item that could be a foreskin, see *ibid.*, p.19, n.70. However, A. M. ROTH, *Egypt in Phyles in the Old Kingdom, The Evolution of a System of Social Organization. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, Oriental Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1991, p. 64, sees that it is an Old Kingdom variant of Gardiner's sign F. 17.
 - *Wb*. V, p.435 (5).
 - According to Herodotus, the Egyptians practiced this custom well before the Syrians of Palestine, *cf. Herodotus*, translated by A. D. GODLEY, London, 1946, II, 104. This custom was acquired afterwards by the Phoenicians and the Hebrew who had a wide and perfect knowledge of the Egyptian medicine, see P. GHALIOUNGUI, *La Médecine des Pharaons*, Paris, 1983, p.115; A. R. HARRIS, *The Legacy of Egypt*, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1971, pp. 112-137; N. I. EBEID, *Egyptian Medicine in the Days of the Pharaohs*, Cairo, 1999, p.116.
 - *ibid.*, p. 116.
 - There is no direct evidence that the full female circumcision practiced in modern Sudan as "pharaonic circumcision", was known in ancient Egypt. Nevertheless, the classical historian STRABO believed that the Egyptians circumcised their daughters, for he wrote: "the Egyptians circumcise the males and excise the females". It is difficult to assess mummified females bodies, destroyed by the mummification process, for evidence of the excision procedure, *cf.* P. GHALIOUNGUI, *op. cit.*, p.117; M. FILER, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of*

- We may mention here for example the panels of Hesi-Rê (JE. 28504), see M. SALEH & H. SOUROUZIAN, *The Official Catalogue of the Egyptian Museum*, Mainz, 1987, n.21.
- For the details of the themes, see N. QANAWATI, *The Tomb and its Significance in Ancient Egypt*, 2nd ed., Cairo, 1991, pp. 107-136.
- For this subject see S. IKRAM, "The Iconography of the Hyena in Ancient Egyptian Art", *MDAIK* 57, 2001, pp. 127-140; *id.*, "HYENAS, HUNTERS OR HUNTED? The Iconography of the Hyena in the Old Kingdom", forthcoming. I would like very much to thank S. Ikram who kindly has communicating me with copies of these two articles.
- A. M. MOUSSA & H. ALTENMÜLLER, *The Tomb of Nefer and Ka-Hay*, *ArchVer* 5, Mainz, 1971, p.24 (E.A. 13.2), pl. 8.
- The representations related to all the historical periods in Egypt attested the existence of the Green Monkey and the Hamadryas Baboon. As for the modern examinations of the mummified monkey remains, it proved also the presence of the Olive Baboon and the Barbary Monkey "*Macaca inua*", *cf.* P. F. HOULIHAN, *The Animal World of the Pharaohs*, Cairo, 1996, pp.95-108.
- 6- For this type of scenes, *cf.* P. MONTET, in *RT* 35, 1913, pp. 117 ff.; *id.*, *Les Scènes de la Vie Privée dans les Tombeaux Egyptiens de l'ancien Empire*, Strasbourg, 1925, pp. 268-273. And for the wine making, see *id. ibid.*, pp. 257ff. ; A. LERSTRUP, "The Making of Wine in Egypt", *GM* 129, 1992, pp. 61-82, and figures.
- For the way of fixing the sack to the poles, see P. MONTET, "Notes sur les tombeaux de Béni-Hassan", *BIFAO* 9, 1911, p. 9.
- For these tombs, see A. M. MOUSSA & H. ALTENMÜLLER, *op. cit.*, p. 111 (n. 610).
- *Ibid.*, pp. 111-2 (Sz. 16.5), Abb. 16.
- A. M. MOUSSA & H. ALTENMÜLLER, *op. cit.*, pp.79-81.
- For the word *ms^ckt*, see *ibid.*, p.80 (a).
- HERODOTUS, II, 37; P. MONTET, *La Vie Quotidienne en Egypte au Temps des Ramsès*, Paris, 1946, p. 73; GALPAZ-FELLER, "The Stela of King Piye: A Brief Consideration of "Clean" and "Unclean" in Ancient Egypt and the Bible", *Revue Biblique*, Paris 102, 1995, pp. 506-521.
- The two most common were the symmetrical blade with a cutting edge at the end and a slender blade-like variety with a cutting edge that curves into the handle to form a hook). For the examples of these two types, see the two golden razors of Queen Hetepheres (JE. 52419, 52417).
- Priests were often depicted shaved (or otherwise depilated) their heads, and probably their entire bodies, as a part of their ritual purification.
- Among the most famous depictions of hairdressing are those from the sarcophagi of the two minor wives of Montuhotep II (JE 47397, 47267). For the

(v) The significance of the tomb Decoration

The Egyptian believed that the spoken or the written word, the scene or the statue could be transformed through magical formulae into reality. Therefore, they thought that the scenes depicted in the tomb would guarantee perpetual sustenance for the tomb's owner. They were probably meant to be transformed into living reality, or were simply a commemoration of the environment, pleasures and achievements of the tomb's owner who was depicted during his lifetime, watching some activities and taking part in others. Some of these scenes are not narratives, they do not refer to a specific event, but they were regular activities enjoyed by the tomb's owner during his life. This kind of scenes would create the surrounding with which the deceased was most familiar. They would be a perpetual reminder of his happy familiar relationships, sports and games he enjoyed, and proud moments of his career.

Some of these scenes, as well as some biographical inscriptions, could also have been intended to impress his descendants, so that they would present him with offering, recite invocation, offering for him, or simply talk about him and mention his name.

As for the second word, it might be noted that the ancient Egyptians, as those of nowadays, used to celebrate a certain feast after having their sons circumcised³⁷. Therefore, the word “*tp-mr*” which might mean the “head of the field”, refers to the place where the festival should be held. Hence, like the market place and the of feast of the harvest, the celebration of the circumcision was likely used to be held in an open yard on the bank or at the head of the watercourse *tp mr(yt)*³⁸.

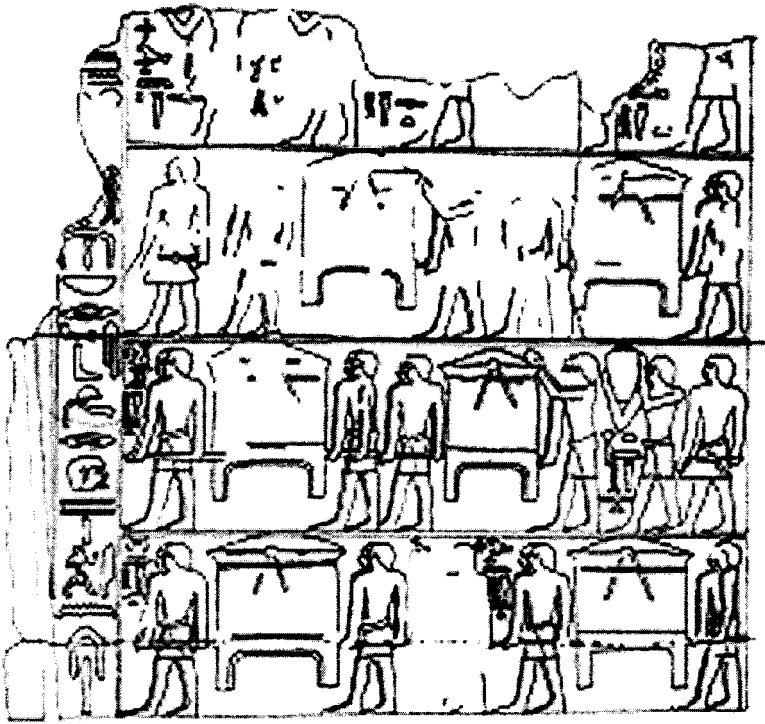


Fig. 5 A procession from the tomb of ‘Ankhma’hor
(After CAPART, *Une rue de tombeaux à Saqqarah*, Bruxelles, 1907, pl. 65)

circumcise would be simply *sbi*. If the phrase meant ‘the *hem-ka* priest is circumcising’, with the subject following the verb as is normal, *sbi* might be the infinitive followed by *hem-ka* as the object, i.e. ‘circumcising the *ka*-priest’. Alternatively, *sbt* might perhaps be the common contraction for *hem-ka* meaning ‘one circumcises’, with *hem-ka* as the object, i.e. ‘one is circumcising the *ka*-priest’, which is the usual manner of indicating the passive mood - ‘the *hem-ka* priest is being circumcised’. Either interpretation gives the *hem-ka* priest as the patient and not the operator. The proposal is then that the scene is an initiation ceremony for the *hem-ka* priest, perhaps one of ‘Ankhmaḥor’s sons. Thus, according to Roth, the scene on the right should be interpreted as shaving the pubic hair for ritual purity. The words of the operator can be read as “[I] will make it pleasant (or sweet)”, while the patient’s words “rub it well, in order that it may be effective” would be entirely appropriate for the use of razors of that period. Further examination of photographs and the relief convinced Roth that the operator was using a razor rather than a knife²⁹.

In fact, Roth’s explanation seems to be more acceptable as the left-hand side scene depicts the most painful part of the operation. Therefore, the assistant of the operator has to immobilize the boy by holding his hands firmly. However, it is quite hard to assume that the *ka*-priest is being circumcised here. Consequently, I incline to consider the word *sbt* as a title for the operation and to see the *ka*-priest as the operator as it would be confirmed from the text below.

In the absence of extant medical related texts³⁰, this operation might have been practiced as a part of a ritual purity or for a hygienic reason. A certain *Weha* from the 11th Dynasty reported that he had circumcised with 120 other “men”³¹. Therefore, it is possible to assume that the Egyptian boys had to be circumcised, between the ages of six and twelve years, during a certain

Commentary:

This document proves that the ancient Egyptians were the first to circumcise their males, perhaps before any other nations in the Middle East²². This custom became highly characteristic of Jewish and Islamic religions and is widespread among the Africans²³.

As for the ancient times, the examination of the Egyptian mummies proved that most, if not all, the Egyptian males were circumcised²⁴. Returning to our scene, it has never been clear why aAnkhmaahor should have chosen to depict it in his tomb, although it has many scenes of medical interest. It has been suggested that it might represent aAnkhmaahor own circumcision or perhaps he simply wanted the facility of circumcision to be available for himself and his family in the hereafter²⁵. There is evidence that he took particular interest in his tomb decoration and many scenes were re-plastered. It is also unclear why a funerary priest should be undertaking the procedure. It is possible also to assume that the scene was depicted here as a part of the activities that used to take place in the local market which includes the feet and hands treatments.

According to A. BADAUY, it seems that the scene in question shows two phases of the same boy's circumcision. At first, the foreskin of the boy's member had to be removed by an operator using a shape knife of flint. Then comes the second phase where the cut had to be treated by a priest who used a fragment of stone²⁶. The Egyptian texts had never mentioned the name of the stone but in this case it is possible to assume that the priest had to rub the boy's organs with the alum²⁷, which have an acid taste and astringent effect, to stop the pleading.

In an entirely new proposal advanced by Ann Macy Roth²⁸, it was pointed out that the words inscribed above the seated man in the left side scene are actually *sbt hm-k3*, whereas the verb to

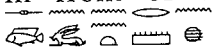
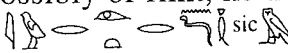
The last four scenes illustrate the barbers in their work. Being perhaps a very important task, the scenes start with the beard shaving that used to be done by two barbers under the supervision of the head barber who is wearing a wide patron. Shaving the beard needs always a very sharp and a clean blade that could be understood from the text in which the barber asks his partner to "Wipe off the razor".

Shaving the head and the hair of the entire body, which were illustrated in the forth and fifth scenes, was a necessity either for coolness or to fit under a wig. Another reason for shaving might have been to get rid of lice, the eggs and adults of which have been found in the hair of mummies¹⁸.

The sixth scene depicting the shaving of the legs' hair is unparalleled and the reason of this custom is not very clear especially for men unless it was to get rid of the lice or to be purified.

3- The circumcision

Location: Tomb of 'Ankhn'ahor at Saqqara, the bottom register of the eastern door-jamb leading to the second room¹⁹.

Description: Depicting an operation of circumcision, this representation is divided into two scenes. The right part of the scene represents the boy standing, holding his right hand over his hip and his left one on the head of the operator who is squatting in front of him. The text inscribed above the boy reads:  *sin wnnt r-mnh* "remove (everything) really completely". As for the operator who deals with the boy's organs by a kind of a curved knife possibly of flint, he tries to relive the boy's worry of fear saying:  *iw (.i) r irt r ndm* "(I) will make (it) agreeable".

The left part of the scene shows the same boy standing completely naked; his hands were raised and held firmly toward

Commentary


Since their very early times, the ancient Egyptians have been very eager to be clean and to keep their hair cut short either during their life or even in the afterlife¹². Cutting the nails or shaving the hair of the head or the entire body was a custom that used to be practiced by women as well as men. Therefore, flint scrapers, razors, knives, and tweezers were found in their tombs as early as the Predynastic Era. Blades for knives and even for razors were later made of copper or gold, according to the wealth of the owner¹³. Apart from these tools, some of the Egyptian texts preserved recipes for concoctions which were supposed to remove hair.


It is also well known that the army, temples¹⁴, wealthy households, and the king's entourage included "barbers", "manicurists" and "pedicurists". The scenes represented in this register show a very interesting feature, not only of the daily life, but also of the civilized manners in Pharoanic Egypt. It is the hairdressing¹⁵ and the body care in ancient Egypt. These scenes were represented here as a part of the activities that used to take place in the local market in ancient Egypt¹⁶ where the people were gathered to get their necessities either from the goods or the other services such as the feet and hands treatments, and the barbers.



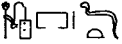
The first two scenes depict the foot and the hand nails care, which were represented in some of the Old Kingdom tombs¹⁷. Two high officials left themselves totally to a pedicurist and a manicurist to handle their feet and their fingernails. Although the clients are of high ranks, it could be mentioned, that the job was done by two simple men and not by the two tomb owners, who were also the royal manicurist and the pedicurist. It is to be noticed also from the fingers movement that the nails were cut first and then glittered. Finally, the scene does not show the tools used in this job, which could be either a cutter or a knife.

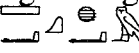




Fig. 3. Treatment of hands and legs in the tomb of Ni-ḥnkḥ-Khnum and Khnum-Hotep
(After A. M. MOUSSA & H. ALTENMÜLLER, *Das Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, Abb. 10)

The next scene depicts a barber squatting on the ground and before him stands a client who is throwing his garment on his right shoulder to become totally naked. The barber is putting the client's right leg on his lap while using his left hand to shave the hair that covers the body starting from the chest to the pubic area. The text describing the process reads:  *šꜥk 3ni* "shaving the hair".

The fifth scene of the register shows two men: a client and a barber. The client is depicted sitting on the ground with joined legs and the upper part of his body is leaning to the back. The barber, who is working in the standing position, holds the client's head with his left hand to shave it with the blade held by his right hand. The text inscribed above the two men reads  Δ $\textcircled{\Delta}$ *šꜥk tp* "Shaving the head".

box represented in a sub-register above the head of the manicurist, the latter's assistant (lit.  = follower) can be seen standing behind his master. As for the client, entitled  "a steward", he is sitting on a mattress and stretches his right hand towards the manicurist who is holding it with his left hand. Behind the latter, there is a third man, described as  "The scribe of the funerary domain". He seems to be another client waiting for his turn to have his nails cut. It is to be noted here that the first client, the steward, is depicted in an unusual way from the frontal side; his shanks had been depicted very clearly, while the squatting pedicurist is represented from the profile view bending his right leg under him.


Moving to the left, we find a group of four men. Starting from the left, the first two men of the group are represented squatting facing each other and the text inscribed above them reads:  *š'k hm'* "Shaving the beard (lit. the neck)". The client, who came to shave his beard, is represented leaning his raised head to the backwards. The barber here is leaning towards the client's extended legs, putting his left hand on his left shoulder.




Using a shaving blade, the barber moves his right hand on the client's neck from down to up. Next comes the third man, described as  *sb3* (= a teacher). He is depicted squatting holding an object that could be an extra blade in his right hand. Just behind the latter, the forth man of the group is represented standing, and the text above the squatting man reads:  *wh3 mš'kt* "Wipe off the razor!"¹¹.

are only four men to twist the sac and carry the baboon in the same time. As the man who keeps the two poles apart is heavier than the baboon, in the other tomb, eight men were needed to do the same task.

2-Shaving men' legs and the body care

Location: This scene is represented on the upper most register, the east-north wall of the first hall, Tomb of Ni-ḥkh-Khnum and Khnum-Hotep at Saqqara¹⁰.

Description: The last scene of the register, is in fact rare and uncommon among these types of scenes. It shows the shaving of the leg's hair. Similar to the body shaving the barber is depicted here leaning in front of his client who threw his cloak on his right shoulder. The Client is keeping his legs apart to let the barber shaving their hair from the top with an unclear tool which seems to be the primitive form for the blade pulling the hair from the right shank. This act is described as:  *hsf rdwy* "shaving the two legs".

The rest of the register represents actions of the body care. Starting from the right-hand side of the register, a man is represented seated on the ground, with his left leg bended under him while the right leg was stretched to be rested on the thigh of another man squatting in front of him. According to the word  inscribed between the two men, it seems that the first is a scribe having the nails of his feet cut by the man who is entitled:  *irt ḥnwt* "The pedicurist". Next, there are a group of three squatting men and a forth standing one. The first squatting man, from the left, is also entitled:  *irt ḥnwt*. In the light of the context of the scene which represents the man cutting the right hand' nails of the man sitting in front of him, the title can be translated as "The manicurist".

Noting that the equipments of the manicurist were placed in a

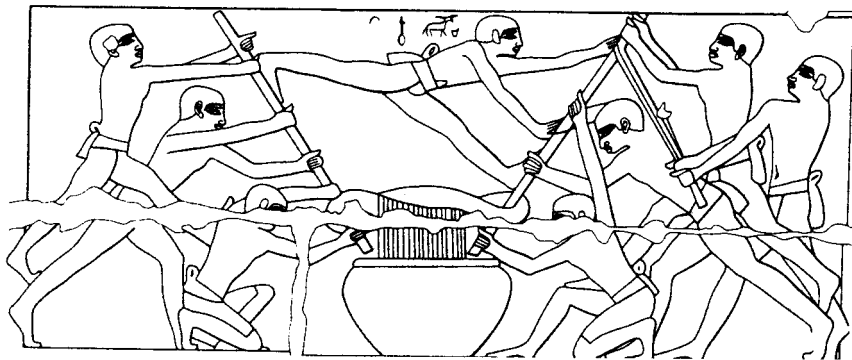


Fig. 2. The sack press in the tomb of Ni- ϵ nh-Khnum and Khnum-Hotep (After A. MOUSSA & H. ALTENMÜLLER, *Das Grab des Nianchchnum und Chnumhotep*, Abb .16)

Examining the two scenes, it is to be noted that in the case of the tomb of Ni- ϵ nh-Khnum and Khnum-Hotep, the two ends of the sack were not very good positioned in the middle of the two poles. It is perhaps to enable the artist to have enough space to represent the man who keeps the two poles apart. Furthermore, there is another interesting feature in the two scenes that should be taken into consideration. From the practical point of view, it is difficult to imagine that either the baboon, or even the man, who is stretching this body between the two poles, can be floating freely in the air while the other men are twisting the two wooden poles in two opposite directions. Here comes the role of the baboon, or the man, who has to push the poles apart to increase the power of the press. In this time the other men have to uplift the poles, with the sack, and the man, or the baboon, to let the juice flow directly into the vat. This small detail can be noted in the Nefer's scene where we see the two men, standing at the lower ends of the poles, carrying the poles on their shoulders.

Accordingly, we might explain the number of the people involved in an operation that does not need eight men or even four. It is quite enough, in my opinion, to be done by only two men. Therefore, we find that in the scene of Nefer's tomb there

This operation made the sack twisted and squeezed the juice out of the wrapped mash. The man at the lower end, depicted in a bent position, is pushing the pole with his hands and shoulders forwards and upwards, while the second man jumps to reach the upper end of the pole, pulling it downwards and backwards. He sets his foot firmly against the other man's posterior while his other leg hangs freely above the ground. Turning the two poles in two opposite directions makes them get closer towards each other and to keep the distance between them, a baboon is represented stretching his body between the two upper pole ends, pushing them apart.

In fact, this scene is almost identical to several ones represented on the walls of some tombs⁸. As an example, we may mention here the scene depicted in the tomb of Ni-ḥkh-Khnum and Khnum-Hotep (Fig .2)⁹. This type of scenes represents a group of eight men: four of them are holding the right pole, three men are occupied with the left pole, and the eighth man is stretching his body between the two poles to keep them apart. The only little difference, which makes the scene in the tomb of Nefer unparalleled, is the existence of the baboon who takes the role of the eighth man in the first tomb. However, it is quite difficult to confirm whether the baboon is actually helping the men or it is just a matter of humors.

1- The monkey and the sack of wine press

Location: Saqqara, the rock-cut tomb of Nefer and Ka-Hay, south of Unas causeway. The second scene on the left side (eastern wall) of the funerary chapel⁴.

Description: The scene depicts four men, wearing loin-cloth, engaged in squeezing the mash by wringing a long narrow sack filled with the pulp left after the treading. The men are assisted by a huge baboon⁵. The grape juice runs freely from the twisted sack into a large vat placed under the press (Fig.1).

Commentary

This scene represents the sack press which is the second phase of the wine preparation⁶. The process starts by the treading of the grapes that used to be done by the feet of men. Then, the pulp had to be wrapped in a piece of cloth or a sack of which the two ends were tied to a tall wooden pole⁷. Two men of the group in the scene are standing at the ends of one pole in order to turn it clock-wise, while the other two turn the other pole anti-clock-wise.

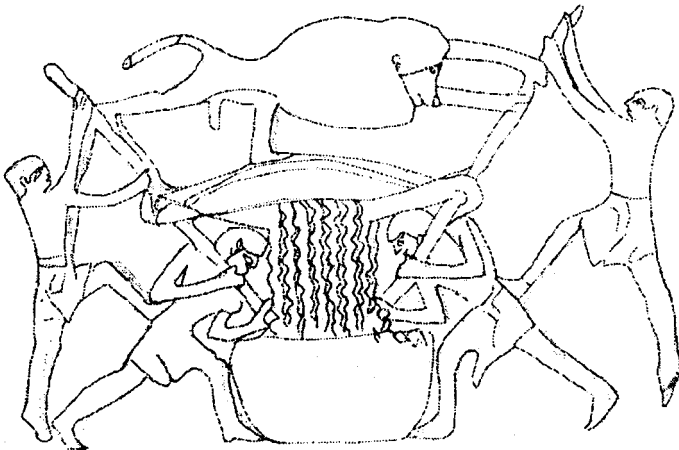


Fig. 1. The sack press in the tomb of Nefer and Ka-Hay

Starting from the 3rd Dynasty, the ancient Egyptians had been eager to have the walls of their tombs decorated with illustrations. Being built of mud-bricks, some tombs of this Dynasty were sometimes adorned with wooden panels bearing scenes of the tomb-owner¹. The *mastabs* of the fourth Dynasty were built by using masonries that provided the artists with good material to achieve their skills in the tomb decoration.

The themes of the scenes represented on the walls were probably decided according to the choice of the tomb-owner, the artist's experience and taste, the customs of the period, the location of the tomb and the surface available for decoration. These scenes would depict some events in the life of the tomb's owner, or they showed what he would like to find in the netherworld. But for sure, they were depicted for the benefit of the owner and not for the visitors. The themes illustrate the tomb-owner and his family, the rural life with all of its activities, fishing, fowling and hunting. They represent also professions and industries, sport and recreation, funerary rites, the afterlife, and some incidental themes². Although the details of each theme could be repeated in more than one tomb, there was a chance to find some uncommon scenes that were not frequently represented; or a unique scene that was depicted only once in all of the Egyptian tombs. One of these, for example, is the problematic scene of the 'force feeding of the hyena' that was captured, 'domesticated', perhaps to be consumed, or used as an equivalent of hunting dogs³. Consequently, this article will be dealing in detail with three of the uncommon scenes that were represented on the walls of the private Old Kingdom tombs in order to throw some light on its significance.

ثلاثة مناظر غير مألوفة
من مقابر الأفراد فى الدولة القديمة
د. محمد إبراهيم على*
ملخص

اعتاد المصرى القديم من عصر الأسرة الثالثة تزيين جدران مقبرته بمناظر تبين الأنشطة التى اعتاد القيام بها فى حياته اليومية. ولقد تم تصنيف هذه المناظر فى ثمانية مواضيع مختلفة صورت ، أو صور بعضاً منها حسب ذوق صاحب المقبرة أو الفنان، فى جميع المقابر التى ترجع إلى عصر الدولة القديمة فى مصر الفرعونية. وعلى الرغم من تكرار المواضيع والمناظر ، وربما بنفس التفاصيل، إلا أنه لا يخلو الأمر من وجود بعض المناظر التى تعتبر إلى حد كبير فريدة أو غير متكررة سواء حسب موضوعها أو تفاصيلها.

وتتناول هذه المقالة بالتحليل اللغوى والفنى لثلاثة من هذه المناظر التى لم تتكرر إلا مرة واحدة أو مرتان على الأكثر فى جميع المقابر التى تعود الى تلك الفترة. وهنا نعرض منظر لاشتراك قرد البابون فى عملية عصر العنب وآخر لختان الذكور والمنظر الثالث للعناية بالجسد وإزالة شعر الأرجل للرجال. ويتم فى النهاية إلقاء الضوء على ماهية وسبب وجود مثل هذه المناظر على جدران المقابر.

Three Uncommon Scenes From The Old Kingdom Private Tombs

Mohamed Ibrahim Aly^{*}

Abstract

The ancient Egyptian used to decorate the walls of his tomb with scenes of his daily activities. These scenes, which were classified into eight different themes, were represented according to the taste of the tomb-owner or the artist himself in the Old Kingdom private tombs. In spite of the repetition of the themes, sometimes with the same details, we may find some uncommon or rare scenes either according to its theme or its details.

The present article deals with the linguistic and the artistic analysis of three of this kind of scenes that were represented only once or twice in all of the tombs belonging to the period in question. Here, we deal with a scene of a baboon helping in the operation of wine press, another scene represents the circumcision and finally the third one shows the body care and the shaving of the hair of men's legs. The article ends with the significance of these scenes on the walls of the Egyptian tombs.

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